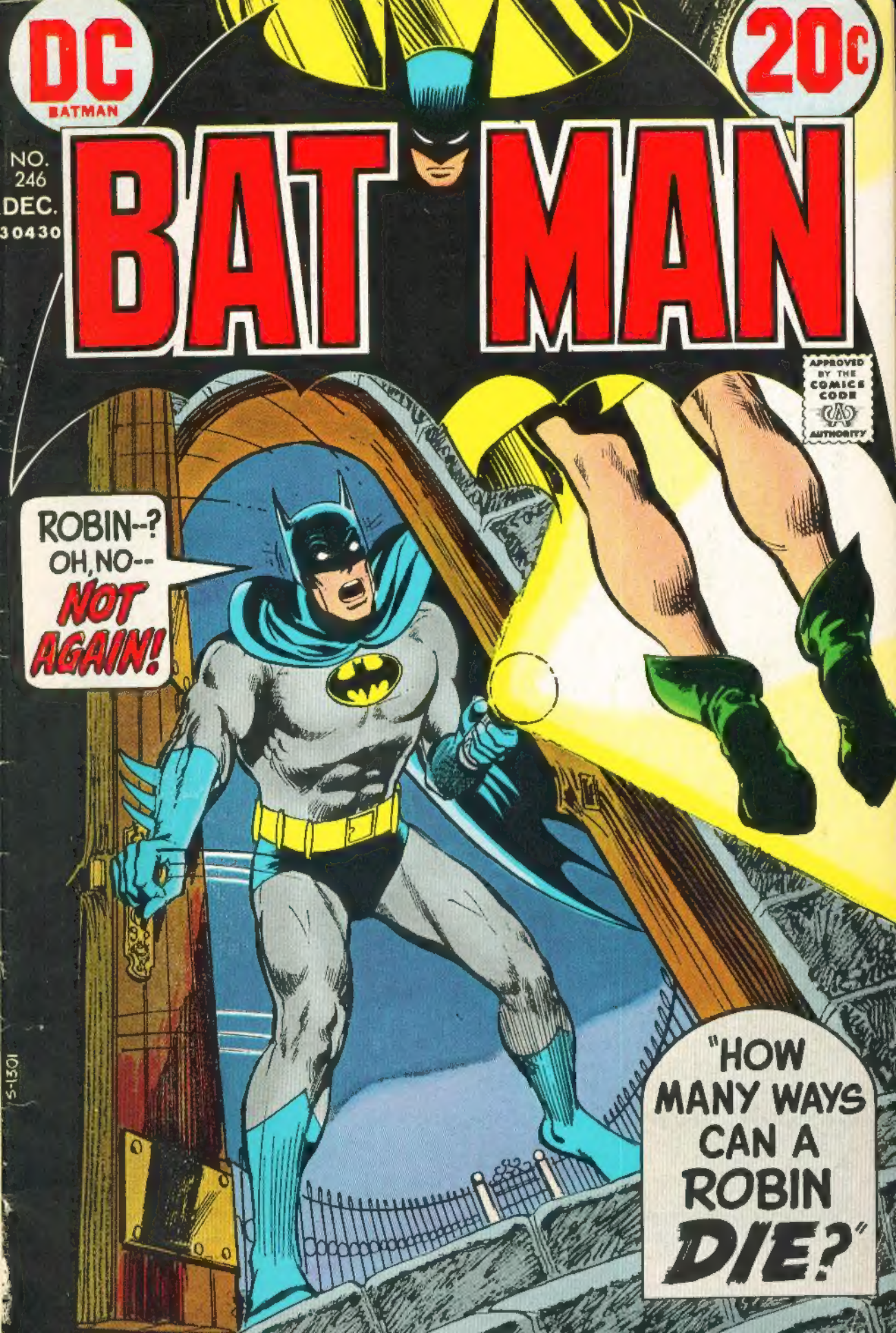
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ROBIN--?
OH, NO--
NOT AGAIN!
"HOW MANY WAYS CAN A ROBIN DIE?"
S-1301

CAN THESE NIGHTMARISH IMAGES BE STOPPED EVEN BY THE MIGHTY

BATMAN

...OR WILL THIS "DREAM OF DREAD" STEAMROLLER OVER THE RAW, EXPOSED NERVES OF A TORMENTED CRIME-FIGHTER... LEAVING HIM POWERLESS TO PREVENT THE GRISLY REALITY OF...

"HOW MANY WAYS CAN A ROBIN DIE?"

STORY: FRANK ROBBINS — ART: IRV NOVICK & DICK GIORDANO

S-1329

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Chapter One: "HOW TO SHAFT A ROBIN!"

OUT ON PATROL AFTER A "MISSION-ACCOMPLISHED", THAT DREAD CRIME-FIGHTER OF GOTHAM... THE BATMAN... IS CONFRONTED BY A NEW, ALARMING CHALLENGE...
THE BAT-SIGNAL--?!
BUT I JUST LEFT POLICE HEADQUARTERS WHERE IT SHOULD ORIGINATE FROM!
THAT BEAM IS COMING FROM THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF TOWN!
IT'S GOT TO BE A PHONY!
A RUSE TO LURE ME... TO WHAT?
--A TRAP?
ONE THING'S FOR SURE... HE WANTS ME IN THE WORST WAY!
THERE IT IS! COMING FROM THE TALLEST BUILDING IN GOTHAM...
...WITH THE AIRCRAFT-WARNING BEACONS ON ITS TOWER!
BUT WHO IS OPERATING ONE OF ITS POWERFUL SEARCH-BEAMS AS A BAT-SIGNAL?
ROBIN...?!
2

ROBIN! WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?
WHY'D YOU SIGNAL ME...?
ANSWER ME...!
WHAT'S WITH THAT KID...?
GOOD GRIEF! COULD HE BE GIVING ME THE SILENT TREATMENT...
...BECAUSE HE'S UNDER THE COMMAND OF A HIDDEN GUN?
NOT A "GUN"--FOR SUDDENLY ...STREAKING PAST THE HORRIFIED BATMAN'S LINE OF SIGHT...
PFFFT!
...AN ARROW HOMES IN... DEAD ON TARGET!...
...FOLLOWED BY AN INVOLUNTARY CRY OF ANGUISH WRENCHED FROM THE HELPLESS CRUSADER'S THROAT...
KTHUNK!
ROBIN-- N-NO!
FOR ONE BRIEF INSTANT, STUNNED HORROR AND DISBELIEF FREEZES THE BATMAN...
OH, GOOD G--! IS HE... DEAD...?
WAS NOTHING I COULD DO TO STOP IT!

SWIFTLY RETURNING TO THE FALLEN ROBIN...
DICK-- ARE YOU...
A--DUMMY?!
THEN IT WAS ALL A TRICK...
...FOR WHAT MAD PURPOSE?
THIS ATTACHED NOTE FIGURES TO TELL ME...
BATMAN--
HOW MANY WAYS CAN A 'ROBIN' DIE?
P.S. THIS IS ONLY THE FIRST! TOMORROW NIGHT AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR... YOU CAN WITNESS THE NEXT!
THE "NEXT"... WHERE?
AND COULD THE KILLER'S SECOND VICTIM BE THE REAL ROBIN?
TORMENTED BY THE HARROWING POSSIBILITY, THE MASKED MANHUNTER ALLOWS NOTHING TO STAND IN HIS WAY!...
KARASH!
GOTTA FIND OUT... RIGHT NOW!
SWIFTLY DIALING AN UPSTATE NUMBER...
DON'T CARE WHO I WAKE... AS LONG AS HE IS THERE!

IN THE TOWN OF NEW CARTHAGE, AT THE BOARDING-HOUSE WHERE DICK (ROBIN) GRAYSON LODGES... AFTER INSISTENT RINGING...
WELL, I NEVER... AT THIS UNEARTHLY HOUR!
DICK...? HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE LAST NIGHT...
ROOM AND BOARD
...HOW WOULD I KNOW WHERE HE GOES?
OR WHERE ANY OF THESE COLLEGE KIDS GALLIVANT...?
AND NO WAY OF REACHING HIM...!
COULD ROBIN HAVE BEEN LURED AWAY... AS I WAS?
MIGHT HE EVEN BE HEADING HERE FOR A RENDEZVOUS WITH THE "KILLER"...
...TOMORROW NIGHT?
THAT MANIACAL SCHEMER WROTE I'D "WITNESS" ROBIN'S KILLING...
...SO HE MUST'VE GIVEN ME A CLUE TO "WHERE"!
THIS ARROW...?
THIS... STRIPED ARROW?
OF COURSE!
A CLUE TO--
--THE "STRIPED-ARROW COUNTRY CLUB"... JUST OUTSIDE GOTHAM!
MOMENTS LATER, ONLY A MUTE MEMENTO OF THE BATMAN'S VISIT REMAINS...
Regret window damage! Be assured you will receive payment in tomorrow's mail!
The BATMAN
CONTINUED ON 2 SP PAGE FOLLOWING.
6

CHAPTER TWO: "HOW TO CARVE A ROBIN!"

DESPITE HIS DECIPHERING OF THE COMING NIGHT'S CODED RENDEZVOUS, *THE BATMAN* KNOWS NO SLEEP...

--NOT WITH THE PLAGUING KNOWLEDGE OF *ROBIN'S DISAPPEARANCE* GNAWING AT HIM!...

SO FAR THIS GAME OF MURDER HAS BEEN *SHEER BLUFF!* BUT UNTIL I CAN BE *SURE* WHERE DICK *IS*...

ONE THING I *AM* SURE OF--HE ISN'T WITH THE *TEEN TITANS!*

I CHECKED *THEM* OUT FIRST!

...WHICH LEAVES *HUDSON UNIVERSITY!*

DAYLIGHT FINDS THE *CAPED CRUSADER* AT THE COLLEGE IN HIS COVER ROLE AS *BRUCE WAYNE,* DICK GRAYSON'S GUARDIAN...

I ASSUMED HE WAS AT *HOME* WORKING ON TERM PAPERS...

UH-UH!

AND I'D HOPED HE WAS OUT ON A FIELD-TRIP ASSIGNMENT....

SO THE NIGHT OF THE APPROACHING "ELEVENTH HOUR" SEES A WEARY AND BAFFLED *BATMAN* RETURNING TO *GOTHAM* IN EVEN GREATER DREAD...

LOOKED INTO ALL HIS HAUNTS... BUDDIES... GIRL FRIENDS...

NO ONE HAS SEEN HIM!

APPREHENSIVELY, HE STAKES OUT THE *"STRIPED-ARROW COUNTRY CLUB"*...

THAT SIGN DISPELS ANY SUSPICION THAT ONE OF THE RESPECTED CLUB MEMBERS MIGHT BE MY *"SUSPECT"*...

STRIPED-ARROW CHARITY FUND-RAISING CARNIVAL TONITE!

THE *"KILLER"* IS MORE LIKELY TO BE ONE OF THE *ENTERTAINERS* BROUGHT IN FOR THIS EVENT!

AND THEN, AS THE GALA FESTIVITIES START...
GATHER ROUND, FOLKS...GATHER ROUND FOR OUR SPECTACULAR ELEVENTH-HOUR OPENER!
ELEVENTH-HOUR...?
IF MY TORMENTOR IS AS PROMPT AS HE IS INGENIOUS...
...THAT COULD BE HIS "ACT"!
AND NOW WE PRESENT, THAT MAGICIAN WITHOUT PEER...
...CHANDRA THE MAGNIFICENT!
...AND HIS DEATH-DEFYING SWORD-ACT!
SWORDS...? IS THAT THE NEXT WAY "ROBIN" WILL DIE?
I'M KEEPING A SHARP EYE ON THAT "MAGICIAN"!
HIS LOVELY FEMALE ASSISTANT LOCKED IN THE CABINET, CHANDRA PLUNGES THE GLEAMING BLADES THROUGH HIS UNSEEN VICTIM...
ZZZWT!
CONTINUED ON 2 NE PAGE FOLLOWING
8

A MOMENT OF HUSHED EXPECTANCY AS CHANDRA WITHDRAWS THE LETHAL BLADES, AND THEN WITH A FLOURISH...THE DEATH-TRAP IS OPENED...
ROBIN...?!
...DEAD!!
AS IF BY MORE MAGIC, THE CARNIVAL REVELRY IS TRANSFORMED INTO SCREAMING CHAOS...EVEN AS AN AVENGING SPECTER DROPS TO THE STAGE...
ONCE MORE I'VE FAILED "ROBIN"! BUT THIS TIME...
...YOU WON'T PULL A "VANISHING ACT" ON ME--KILLER!
MY HAND, BATMAN--IS FASTER...
...THAN YOUR EYE!
9

YOU DON'T TRICK MY EYE MORE THAN ONCE, CHANDRA!
CLANG!
WHANG!
KRANG!
AND NOW-- LET'S SEE HOW FAST YOUR HAND IS!
"SEEING" IS MORE THAN "BELIEVING," BATMAN...
ZAP!
...IT'S YOUR LIFE!
THAT CAPE-TRICK CAN BE A TWO-EDGED SWORD, FRIEND--
--IT ALSO BLINDED YOU!
NOW-- PARRY THIS!
--WITH EASE!
PRESTO...

...CHANGE-O!
?! A TRICK SWORD!
ZUNG!
SAVE THOSE FLOWERS FOR YOUR-- GRAVE!
YOU BURY ME PREMATURELY, PAL!
PERHAPS!
BUT--NOW YOU SEE ME, BATMAN...
WOOSH!
NOW YOU DON'T!
AND, AS THE MAGIC MIST SLOWLY CLEARS. .
LOST HIM!
ONLY HIS DISGUISE LEFT, TO TAUNT ME!
WHO WAS HE... WHO?

ONE THING I DO KNOW ABOUT MY TORMENTOR HE WASN'T SERIOUSLY TRYING TO KILL ME!
UH-UH, THAT WOULD SPOIL HIS "FUN"--
--KILLING "ROBIN" TO BUG ME!
SUSPICION VERIFIED! IT IS ANOTHER DUMMY...
AND ANOTHER NOTE!
"TOMORROW NIGHT, ELEVENTH HOUR.. THE THIRD WAY!"
"PS: WHO KNOWS, THIS ONE MAY BE THE REAL ROBIN!"
ONCE AGAIN WHERE?
BLAST HIM, HE'S GOT ME CLIMBING WALLS!
LIKE THE ARROW, COULD THIS SWORD BE MY CLUE?
OR, SWORD... AND CAPE? SWORD-CAPE...? CAPE-SWORD..?
THAT DEVIL! HE'S GOT ME WILDLY FISHING FOR THE RIGHT WORD-COMBO...
...LIKE A FEARFUL IDIOT!
FISHING...? FEAR...?
THAT'S IT...! "SWORD-FISH PIER"...
...AT "CAPE FEAR"!
SNAP
WHAT UGLY WAY WILL HE KILL ROBIN THIS TIME?
THAT TWISTED CREEP! HE'S GOT ME PLAYING HIS SICK GUESSING GAME...
...WHEN I SHOULD BE TRYING TO PREVENT ROBIN'S "DEATH"!

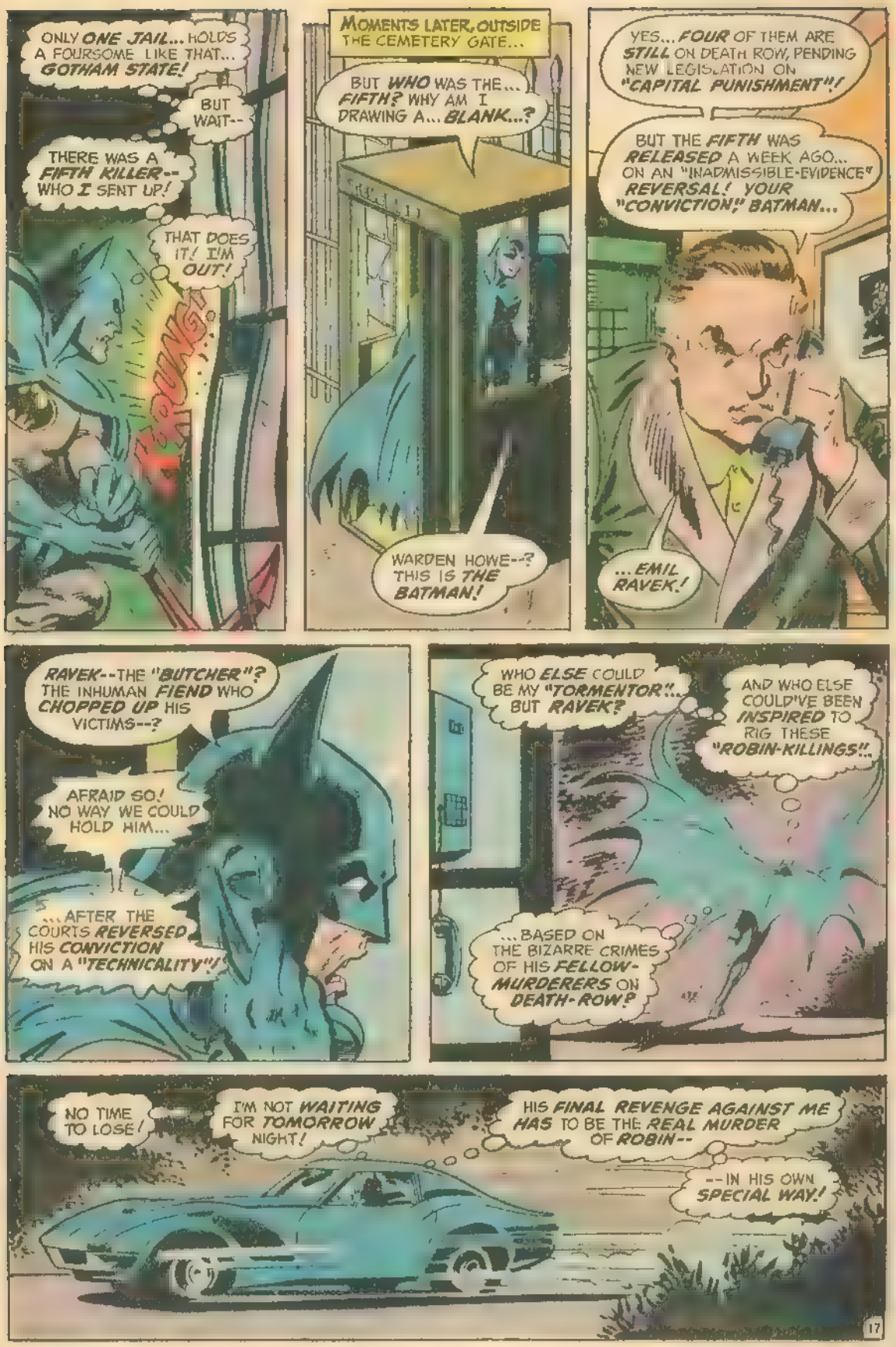
CHAPTER THREE: "HOW TO BURY A ROBIN... DEEP!"
THE THIRD NIGHT OF THE BATMAN'S TORMENT IS SHROUDED IN DRIFTING MIST. AND DARK MYSTERY...
THE FISHING BOATS ARE UNLOADED ALONG HERE
BUT WHAT'S IN THE SCHEMER'S MAD MIND THIS TIME?
HOW CAN I SAVE ROBIN... IF I CAN'T FIND HIM?
AND IN THIS FOG I CAN BARELY SEE...
THEN, SUDDENLY... THE CREAK OF A HOISTING BLOCK-AND-TACKLE...
CR-E-E-A-K!
WHA...?
A BOUND FIGURE MATERIALIZES FROM THE MIST ABOVE
..AND PLUMMETS LIKE A ROCK TOWARD THE DARK WATERS BELOW!
THAT FIEND! THIS COULD BE THE LIVING ROBIN!
I CAN'T CHANCE THAT IT'S JUST ANOTHER DUMMY-TRICK!
DEEP UNDER THE MURKY WATERS AN ANGUISHED BATMAN FIGHTS TO FREE "ROBIN"...
A CONCRETE-WEIGHT CHAINED TO ANKLES!
GOTTA CUT IT LOOSE..
13

SUDDENLY COOL AND SWIFT OUT FROM OUT OF THE NIGHT HE WHIPS OUT HIS MINI LASER-BEAM...
MUSTN'T PANIC! IF I DO...I'M PLAYING THE SCHEMER'S GAME!
BUT AS THE PIERCING RED BEAM LIGHTS UP THE TURGID BLACKNESS
FOOLED AGAIN, BATMAN! WILL TOMORROW NIGHT BE THE REAL THING?
THAT EVIL...CONNIVING ...SADIST! HAD ME BITE FOR A "ROBIN" DUMMY AGAIN
TRYING TO SAVE "HIM" FROM A WATERY GRAVE!
A "WATERY GRAVE"? I WONDER.. IS THAT MY CLUE FOR TOMORROW NIGHT...?
THE SEAMEN'S GRAVE.."DAVEY JONES' LOCKER"?
BUT THAT'S JUST WHERE I CAME FROM... THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA!
HOLD IT! THERE'S ANOTHER BURIAL PLACE IN GOTHAM FOR SEAMEN WHO WEREN'T LOST AT SEA...
...ST. ELMO'S GRAVEYARD-- ST. ELMO...PATRON SAINT OF THE SEA!

CHAPTER FOUR: "HOW TO TWIST A ROBIN'S NECK!"

THE FOLLOWING NIGHT, IN ST. ELMO'S GRAVEYARD.
THAT CRYPT DOOR IT'S OPEN!
OH H NO! ROBIN-- NOT AGAIN?!
AGAIN - AGAIN AND AGAIN! AND ALWAYS-- A DUMMY-ROBIN!
T THIS TIME NO NOTE!
THAT MERCILESS GHOUL! I'M BE NO PR VEN UP A WALL!..
A STONE WALL I CAN'T PENE-TRATE!
ABRUPTLY. .
CLAANG!
KILLING NUMBER FOUR, BATMAN!
WANT TO TRY FOR FIVE?
I'M IMPRISONED...BY AN UNSEEN EXECUTIONER I CAN'T EVEN TOUCH!
15

THIS IS HIS FINAL JEST... NO CLUE AT ALL TO HIS NEXT MOVE! WHICH HAS TO HAPPEN...TO THE REAL ROBIN!
THERE MUST BE A PATTERN TO HIS MURDEROUS SCHEMINGS!
THINK, BATMAN... THINK! ROBIN'S LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!
FOUR "KILLINGS" IN A ROW... A ROW OF DEATH...
--"DEATH-ROW"... LIKE THE "PRISON" I'M IN!
I'M ON TO SOMETHING--
BUT I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE FIRST!
HE'S GOT ME SO RATTLED... FORGOT MY LASER-BEAM!
WHAT'S WITH THIS THING--?
SHORTED OUT... BY THE SALT-WATER CORROSION!
GOTTA FIND ANOTHER MEANS...
THAT ANCHOR DECORATION FOR A RICH SHIP-OWNER'S SARCOPHAGUS!
MAYBE HE COULDN'T TAKE IT WITH HIM
..BUT IT MAY PROVIDE MY EXIT TO THE WORLD OF THE LIVING!
WITH ALMOST SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH BORN OF DESPERATION
"DEATH-ROW"... MURDERERS WHO HAVE KILLED THEIR VICTIMS BY ARROW... SWORD ...DROWNING... AND HANGING!
HOW MANY JAILS HOLD KILLERS LIKE THAT?
16

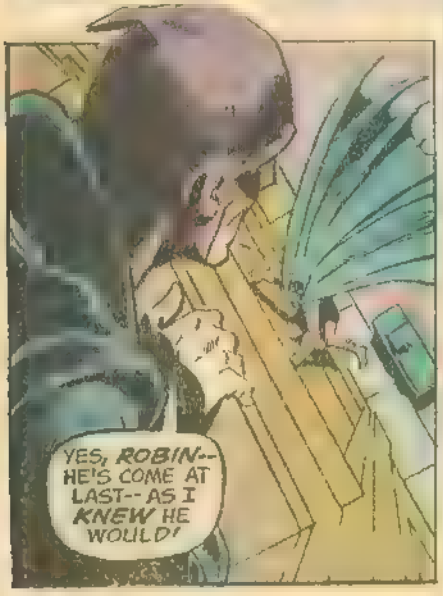

ONLY ONE JAIL... HOLDS A FOURSOME LIKE THAT... GOTHAM STATE!
BUT WAIT--
THERE WAS A FIFTH KILLER-- WHO I SENT UP!
THAT DOES IT! I'M OUT!
KRUNG!
MOMENTS LATER, OUTSIDE THE CEMETERY GATE...
BUT WHO WAS THE... FIFTH? WHY AM I DRAWING A... BLANK...?
WARDEN HOWE--? THIS IS THE BATMAN!
YES... FOUR OF THEM ARE STILL ON DEATH ROW, PENDING NEW LEGISLATION ON "CAPITAL PUNISHMENT"!
BUT THE FIFTH WAS RELEASED A WEEK AGO... ON AN "INADMISSIBLE-EVIDENCE" REVERSAL! YOUR "CONVICTION," BATMAN...
...EMIL RAVEK!
RAVEK--THE "BUTCHER"? THE INHUMAN FIEND WHO CHOPPED UP HIS VICTIMS--?
AFRAID SO! NO WAY WE COULD HOLD HIM...
...AFTER THE COURTS REVERSED HIS CONVICTION ON A "TECHNICALITY"!
WHO ELSE COULD BE MY "TORMENTOR"... BUT RAVEK?
AND WHO ELSE COULD'VE BEEN INSPIRED TO RIG THESE "ROBIN-KILLINGS"!
...BASED ON THE BIZARRE CRIMES OF HIS FELLOW-MURDERERS ON DEATH-ROW?
NO TIME TO LOSE!
I'M NOT WAITING FOR TOMORROW NIGHT!
HIS FINAL REVENGE AGAINST ME HAS TO BE THE REAL MURDER OF ROBIN--
--IN HIS OWN SPECIAL WAY!

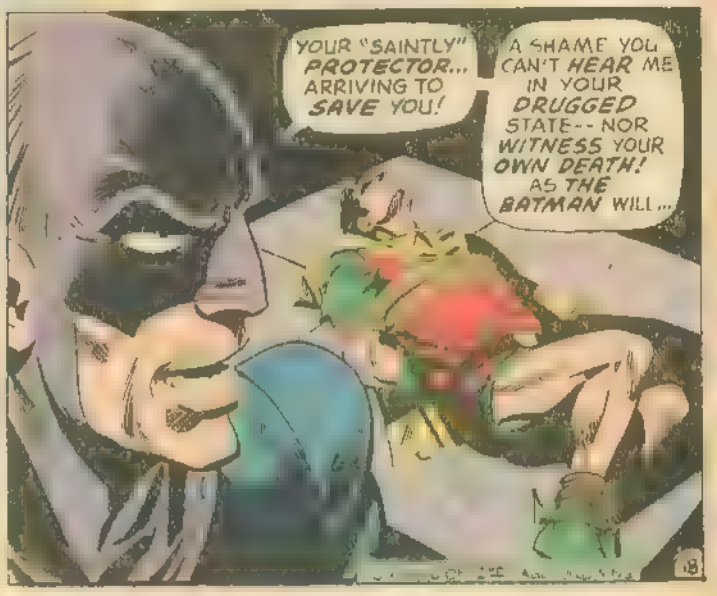
CHAPTER NINE: "HOW TO CHOP UP A ROBIN!"

THIS CHAPTER PENCILLED BY DICK DILLIN

THE BRUTAL REVELATION OF THE "TORMENTOR'S" IDENTITY SPURS THE BATMAN INTO A FRENZIED RACE AGAINST AN UNKNOWN DEADLINE!...
RAVEK...THE "BUTCHER"! A TWISTED KILLER WITH ONLY ONE FIXED IDEA IN HIS HEAD...
...TO DESTROY THE MAN WHO SENT HIM TO THE DEATH-HOUSE... DESTROY HIM SLOWLY BY MENTAL TORTURE!

...TO MAKE ME SWEAT AND CRINGE AS HE MUST'VE DONE DURING THOSE LONELY MONTHS ON DEATH-ROW... WAITING FOR HIS EXECUTION!
BUT NOW I KNOW WHERE TO FIND HIM! HE'S RETURNED TO THE SCENE OF HIS LAST MACABRE SLAYING...




YOUR "SAINTLY" PROTECTOR... ARRIVING TO SAVE YOU!
A SHAME YOU CAN'T HEAR ME IN YOUR DRUGGED STATE--NOR WITNESS YOUR OWN DEATH! AS THE BATMAN WILL...

PASSING NIGHTMARE RE-CREATIONS IN WAX THE BATMAN SILENTLY STALKS THE EERIE MUSEUM... HUNTING... HUNTING...
ROBIN'S GOT TO BE HERE... SOMEWHERE! IF I CAN ONLY FIND SOME SLIGHT TRAIL... A DRAGGING HEEL-MARK...ANYTHING!
MARAT'S DEATH
SUDDENLY... TO THE CLICK OF A THROWN ...IGHT-SWITCH...
LOOKING FOR ROBIN, BATMAN?
THEN LOOK...
MASS MURDERER MADAME GUILLOTINE
...HERE!

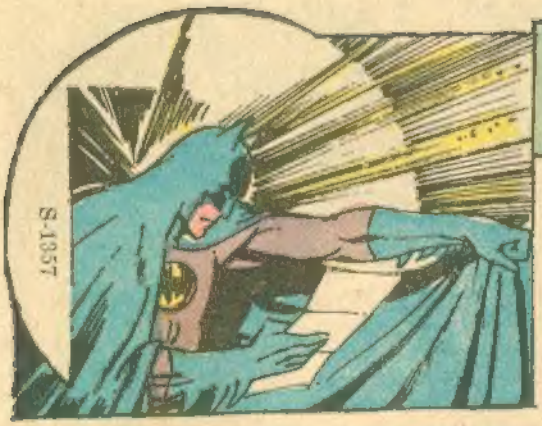
LOOK WELL, BATMAN--THIS IS NO DUMMY! NO WAXWORK-REPLICA OF ROBIN...
IT'S THE "TEEN WONDER" IN PERSON!
AND WHEN I TRIP THIS GLEAMING BLADE...
...I SHALL SAVOR THE LOOK OF HORROR ON YOUR FACE...
...AS YOU HELPLESSLY WATCH HIS HEAD ROLL INTO THE BASKET!
RAVEK--Y-YOU CAN'T! IF YOU WANT TO REVENGE YOURSELF ON ME, KILL ME, NOT ROBIN...
SALOME
OH, NO--BATMAN! MY PLEASURE IS IN KEEPING YOU ALIVE...
...SO YOU CAN SPEND YOUR REMAINING YEARS AS A GIBBERING IDIOT!
CREAKKKK
KA-AK
HSOOOOOMS
BUT HIS "TORMENTOR" HAS NOT RECKONED WITH THE ICY CONTROL OF THE BATMAN'S MIND IN MOMENTS OF INHUMAN STRESS! IN THE HALF-BLINK OF AN EYELID...
ONLY ONE POSSIBLE WAY TO SAVE ROBIN NOW..

...STOP THE BLADE!
CHANK-K
ARGH-H! THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO BEHEAD A ROBIN!
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS
--NOT UNLESS YOU TAKE MY HEAD FIRST, RAVEK!
THEN PREPARE TO DIE-- BATMAN!
KRANG G.

I'M ALWAYS PREPARED, RAVEK...
...BUT NOT TO DIE AT THE HANDS OF RABID DOGS LIKE YOU!
G-GUH!
BUT SUDDENLY, RAVEK'S FATE IS TORN OUT OF THE CAPED CRUSADER'S HANDS... AS...
R-R-RIP
GHAH-H-H! N-NO--NO-- NO!
DID JUSTICE TRIUMPH IN THESE FAMOUS CRIMES?
22

LATER, AS A DISORIENTED ROBIN COMES OUT OF HIS DRUG-INDUCED FOG...
B-BATMAN...? WHERE... WHERE AM I...?
AS CLOSE TO DEATH AS I EVER HOPE YOU GET, SON!
23
UGH
IRONIC, ISN'T IT, BATMAN ...IF I'D BEEN AWAKE THROUGH IT ALL--
...THIS ROBIN WOULD HAVE DIED A THOUSAND DEATHS!
THE END

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE ON OR ABOUT DEC. 14



LETTERS to the BATMAN

Dear Editor:

Being a bit behind the times, I've known of J.R.R. Tolkien's "Lord of the Rings" trilogy for about a year, and have just gotten around to reading it. I know now what all the excitement is about. Tolkien is a master storyteller. But between chapters, I picked up a batch of new comix, *Batman* #243 being in the bunch. And, wonder of wonders, "The Lazarus Pit" had me back in Tolkien-land again! I was much reminded of the *Fellowship* by *Batman & Company*, who have set off on a quest almost as hopeless as Frodo Baggins'. Coming to the end of the issue, I saw the *Demon* come on like the *Dark Lord, Sauron*, with an evil glint in the eyes and a face of hatred, hatred for all but himself.

All of which is to say, Denny O'Neil's current work is as captivating as the Ring Tales, only a little more shallow, a little more compact. Don't take offense at the previous statement, though. Surely you can't expect to equal Tolkien's epic in 24 pages!

Denny's work has an advantage over the Ring-lore, though! The medium in which he works is able to portray the action through a series of pictures, pictures by another literary and artistic giant, Neal Adams. Neal's simple, solid paneling was beautiful.

With this series, Denny has captured my attention as few others in the comix medium have. If this beginning segment is any indication, the best in comix is definitely yet to come.

—*MARK LUCKE, Beeville, Tex.*

(When you're hot, you're hot! *And when you're* cold *(which is the reaction of the next correspondent to this* Batman *issue), it's* burial *time!*—JS*)*

Dear Editor:

The latest issue of *The Batman* (#243) had within its covers one of the most poorly written and illustrated stories published in the last four years! I thought (and hoped) the "camp" era was dead, but you seem determined to bring it back!

I just can't understand why you're so determined to bring "camp" back. It's been proven that the majority of readers want a *Batman* that is a fearsome, dark avenger of justice; who fights crime not for fun, but because his parents were slain by a hood named Joe Chill when he was a child! He became *The Batman* in the hopes the he could prevent such tragedies in the future. We want *The Batman*, not some clod that calls himself *Batman!*

"The Lazarus Pit" was trite and incoherent in plot, characterization, and more particularly in dialogue. The featured characters of Ling, Molly Post, Talia, and our Caped Clod . . . er . . . Crusader were extremely stereotyped. Ling is an egotistic fool who has a vague conception of justice; Molly Post is stupid, sees *Batman* (I refuse to call this dummy *The Batman*) trying to capture a female criminal, and of all things accuses him of man-handling a "helpless" girl! As for Talia, she's an idiot who likes to straddle the fence between good and evil; worst of all is the sub-plot, that *Batman* is supposedly in love with this amoral creep!

The art by Neal Adams and Dick Giordano was lousy but understand that it was *Adams'* fault, not Giordano's. Even since Adams won the *Shazam* award, his art contains less and less detail. What has happened to his one-time imaginative layouts?

—*JAMES T. McCOY, JR., Valley Station, Ky.*

(Now let's zero in on another correspondent in another "camp"!—JS*)*

Dear Editor:

A couple of years ago, as the "camp" craze was dying out, I wrote you a letter calling for the return of *The Batman* of old—dark, mysterious, swift avenger of the night. It was something of a long time coming, but we've been getting it for a while now, so it's time to say thanks. *The Batman* is delightful. I'm sure the younger crowd is digging the action and suspense.

But for the older crowd. . .

Well, you *know* he's a little bit "crazy"! Denny O'Neil has a marvelous sense of subtle fun, and his scripts usually show *Batman* as the somewhat fanatic character he truly must be. I mean, to run around in a costume, vigilante-like, calling crooks "filthy scum" while bashing in their heads . . . and never even stopping for coffee! *Of course* he's a little "crazy"—and I *love* it!

Talia (whew!) kisses *Batman* in "The Lazarus Pit" and cape-and-cowl says, "Your lips are warm, as always!—And as always, they chill me . . . to the *marrow!*" What fun! And Neal Adams digs exotic costumes, I see. Not to mention exotic females.

As I enter my senior year at New York University, it gets a little harder to stand those indulgent, condescending smiles from people who say, "Ah, you *still* read comix books?" But what the heck—there's *still* a lot of us—and we're having a good time!

—*LOREN LIEBERTHAL, New York, N.Y.*

Dear Editor:

Magnificent is *the* word for #243 of *Batman!* Once again, you, Denny O'Neil and Neal Adams, and your staff have presented us with a masterful work of literature. "The Lazarus Pit" was an excellently carried out piece of material, and I must congratulate Mr. O'Neil on it. And I was so glad to see Neal Adams back on *Batman!* He is one of the few who portrays *Batman* as the true creature of the night that he should be . . . even in the daytime!

Ra's al Ghul is one of the most original villains and the *first* worthy opponent *Batman* has faced in a very long time. He is cunning and very intelligent. He seems to have the most efficient, logical, analytical, diabolical mind I have ever seen in an opponent of *Batman*. He has to be all these things, or else how could he stand up against *The Batman* this long, and have *Batman* worried . . . so worried he was forced to eliminate Bruce Wayne as part of his master plan!

—*GAIL BURT, Temple City, Cal.*

Address communications to LETTERS TO THE BATMAN, National Periodical Publications, 909 Third Ave., New York, N.Y., 10022.